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IN THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Original) A node for grooming low capacity client signals into a high capacity signal, comprising:
 - an interface to a high capacity trunk for coupling to a type one node; and
 - an interface to a high capacity trunk for coupling to a type two node;
 - wherein only a portion of those low capacity client signals destined for the type one node are groomed into the high capacity trunk to the type two node.
2. (Original) The apparatus of claim 1 wherein the groomed portion is zero.
3. (Original) The apparatus of claim 1 wherein the type two node is a high traffic node.
4. (Original) The apparatus of claim 1 wherein the type one node is a cable station and the type two node is a central office.
5. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the low capacity client signals are comprise E1 (PDH (plesiochronous digital hierarchy)) type plesiochronous digital hierarchy signals and the high capacity signal is comprises a synchronous transport module (STM-1) signal.
6. (Currently Amended) ~~Apparatus~~ An apparatus for performing selective grooming of client signals, the apparatus comprising:
 - a node coupled (a) directly to a first node via a high capacity trunk, and (b) to a second node via a high capacity trunk such that only a portion of the client signals destined for the first node are groomed into the high capacity trunk to the second node.
7. (Original) The apparatus of claim 6 wherein the groomed portion is zero.

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8. (Original) The apparatus of claim 6 wherein the first node is a low traffic node and the second node is a high traffic node.
9. (Original) The apparatus of claim 6 wherein the first node is a cable station and the second node is a central office.
10. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 6, wherein the client signals comprise E1 (PDH (plesiochronous digital hierarchy)) type plesiochronous digital hierarchy signals and the high capacity trunk supports a synchronous transport module (STM-1) signal.
11. Cancelled
12. Cancelled
13. Cancelled
14. (Currently Amended) A method for use in a node, the method comprising the steps of:
receiving low capacity client signals;
selectively grooming a portion of the received low capacity client signals into a high capacity trunk for transmission to a first type of node; and
transmitting others of the low capacity client signals over an other high capacity trunk directly coupled to a second type of node;
wherein said others of the low capacity signals transmitted over the other high capacity trunk comprise low capacity client signals destined for the first type of node.
15. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 14, wherein the low capacity client signals represents E1 (PDH (plesiochronous digital hierarchy)) type comprise

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plesiochronous digital hierarchy signals and the high capacity trunk supports a synchronous transport module (STM-1) signal.

16. (Original) The method of claim 14 wherein the groomed portion is zero.

17. (Original) The method of claim 14 wherein the second type of node is a cable station and the first type of node is a central office.

18. (Original) The method of claim 14 wherein the second type of node is a low traffic node and the first type of node is a high traffic node.

19. (New) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein grooming of the portion of those low capacity client signals destined for said type one node into the high capacity trunk to said type two node further comprises:

determining an amount of traffic between another type one node and said type one node;

determining whether said amount of traffic between said another type one node and said type one node exceeds a threshold, said threshold comprising a fraction of a capacity of said high capacity trunk; and

if said amount of traffic between said type one node and said another type one node does not exceed said threshold, routing said amount of traffic over said high capacity trunk to said type two node.

20. (New) The method of claim 19, further comprising:

if said amount of traffic between said type one node and said another type one node exceeds said threshold, provisioning at least one additional trunk between said another type one node and said type one node.